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THE NEGRO AFTER FIFTY YEARS OF FREEDOM



Depicted by courtesy of G. W. H. Hitcher. From left to right the members of the War Cabinet are: Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War; Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury; Abraham Lincoln, President; Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy; William H. Seward, Secretary of State; (standing), Caleb B. Smith, Secretary of the Interior; Montgomery Blair, Postmaster-General; and Edward Bates, Attorney General.

THE HISTORICAL CABINET MEETING WHEN PRESIDENT LINCOLN SIGNED THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.

On the Anniversary of Lincoln's Proclamation of Emancipation Well Known Men Discuss Its Effect on the Colored Race and Tell of Material Prosperity and Mental Progress Achieved

ABRAHAM LINCOLN abolished slavery in the United States just fifty years ago to-day by the preliminary Proclamation of the Emancipation issued on September 22, 1862.

This preliminary proclamation decreed the emancipation on January 1, 1863, of all slaves in States which continued to be in a state of rebellion on that date. The final freeing of slaves was accomplished by the final Proclamation of Emancipation issued on January 1, 1863. The abolition of slavery in the States and parts of States not covered by the proclamation was effected subsequently by the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

The proclamation was issued as a war measure. For some time previously President Lincoln had been urged to take such a step, but had delayed doing so believing that public opinion was not yet ripe for it. The battle of Antietam, by which Lee was defeated in his first attempt to invade the North, supplied the opportunity and five days later Lincoln issued the document which earned him the name of the Liberator.

The effect the proclamation had on the war is recorded in history. What has been its effect on the negro in the fifty years which have elapsed since it was issued?

HOPES MORE THAN REALIZED.

By GEN. ROGER A. PRYOR
The emancipation of the negro in the South has more than realized the hopes of his friends and has disappointed the expectations of his enemies.

prosperity. While in bondage they were forbidden even to read or write; now they universally both read and write and exhibit eagerness in the acquisition of knowledge.

At the time of secession the cotton crop, exclusively the production of the slave, was 3,000,000 bales annually; now that crop, mainly the production of the emancipated slave, is 16,000,000 bales. At the time of secession the negro slave of course had no property; now the negro owns property, real as well as personal, in incredible amounts.

This being my conviction of the emancipated negro, I wish it clearly understood that I do not recognize the social or intellectual equality of the negro nor consent to his political ascendancy in the South. This is the universal sentiment, as I observe it, of the people of the South, but at the same time all the negro's civil rights, that is his rights of person and property, are recognized and protected by the courts in the South.

WHAT THE NEGRO THINKS.

By BOOKER T. WASHINGTON.

When Mr. Lincoln freed my race nearly fifty years ago, it was freely predicted that we could prove a burden upon the pocketbook of the nation. Many said that the negro race would not feed, clothe or shelter itself.

The American Congress is called upon to appropriate from year to year between \$10,000,000 and \$12,000,000, largely for the sustenance of the American Indian, but it should be borne in mind that since the days of reconstruction Congress has not been asked to appropriate a single dollar to be used in providing either clothing, food or shelter for the American negro. In these respects he has cared for himself. In this we have proved that we have not been and are not to be a burden upon the nation. The only call that we have made upon the generosity of the public has been for money for education.

Emancipation benefited two races in the South rather than one, that is, the white

and the black. We are just beginning to realize to what extent both races were benefited in their growth by reason of slavery. We are beginning to realize how much more can be accomplished through free labor, free thinking and free speaking than through slavery.

Two classes of people, I think, have been disappointed in the results of freedom. One is the class of people who expected too much on the part of the negro, and the other the class which expected too little.

We must bear in mind in discussing this subject that the colored people when they were first made free required a little time in which to find themselves, to find what they could accomplish and what they could not accomplish. In a word, it required years for them to find themselves. Not only this but a good deal of time was naturally spent in the effort of the colored people to readjust themselves to the white people in their new relations, and the white people to readjust their life to the life of the free colored man.

It was natural and to be expected that a number of foolish things would be done both on the part of the colored people and the white people. In my opinion more real progress has been made both by the colored people themselves and by the white people in this readjustment

during the last twenty years than was made during the previous thirty years.

The class of people who expected too much on the part of the negro were those who thought that within a few years he could accomplish that which it required centuries for other races to accomplish. Those who expected too little were those who believed that he could not make any progress outside of slavery.

It would surprise any one who goes, as I do, into the heart of the South among the masses of colored people to find to what extent they have turned their attention to the getting of property. The most noticeable change is in the type of houses they are now owning and using.

One can scarcely go into any Southern community now where he will not find a number of colored people owning houses with eight and ten rooms, often with bathroom, parlor, dining room and everything fitted up in good style. The colored people have bought within the last fifty years at least 400,000 homes, not all, however, of the type I have mentioned.

They own now, mostly in the South, about 20,000,000 acres of land. The recent census figures show that in some of the Southern States they are acquiring farm property at a more rapid rate than is the case with the white farmers. In



Virginia during the last ten years the colored people have bought 4,000 more farms than they owned in the previous ten years. In Tennessee there is an equal number. In Arkansas they purchased 10,000 more farms than they owned in the previous ten years, in Alabama an equal number, in Mississippi 35,000, and in Georgia 39,000. These figures will give some idea of their rate of progress in property getting.

The negro is going into business at a more rapid rate than anybody outside of the South realizes. In the Southern States there are at least 100 dry goods stores and groceries owned and operated by colored people. There are over 300 drug stores owned and operated by colored people and more than 50 banks. In commercial and business directions the white and colored people in the South trade with each other about as freely as is true of any other class of people. All these changes have been brought about within fifty years.

The progress in getting education on the part of the colored people is a matter of encouragement. When Mr. Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation only 3 per cent. could read or write. The last census figures show that at the present time 68 per cent. can read and write. This progress has been made notwithstanding the fact that in many parts of the South the negro does not receive his just share of money from the public school funds, but through the various church organizations a great deal of money has been contributed by the colored people themselves for their own education aside from what is received from the public school funds.

We have convinced a large portion of the Southern white people as well as the Northern white man that the negro can be benefited by education, and now that we have done that I believe that more

money is going to be given in the future for our education than has been true in the past.

When our race was made free they owned very little church property. Since freedom they have built over thirty church houses and have over 30,000 ministers.

The negro, like any other newly free race, had the idea at the beginning that education would free him from all necessity of working with his hands. He has now learned that there is no more disgrace for an educated man to work with his hands than for an ignorant man to do the same thing. In a word, he has learned during the last fifty years the dignity of labor and the disgrace of idleness.

Of course the negro has suffered in the past, and still continues to suffer, by reason of the fact that the crime which he commits is unduly exaggerated, while his progress in the real things of life is not always shown to the public. For this reason a superficial person is likely to get the idea that the negro is more criminal than he actually is. They hear of the negro who breaks the law, but not so much of the negro who is living a quiet, industrious, moral, upright life.

It has been my privilege to travel pretty widely among many classes of people in this country and in Europe, but I have met no class of people in the same relative stage of civilization who have higher respect for the moral law than is true of the masses of colored people. Within our fifty years of freedom a public sentiment has been created within the race which frowns upon all immoral living and encourages righteous living. There was no such public sentiment existing when we were slaves.

Those still remain, however, a considerable class of white people who have

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PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

By the President of the United States of America.

A PROCLAMATION

Whereas on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following to wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the naval and military authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom;

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen by election wherein a majority of the qualified electors of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and Government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing the same, do hereby declare, that on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my previous so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof, respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:—Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana (except the parishes of St. Bernard,

Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terre Bonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans), Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth), and which excepted parts are left for the present precisely as if this proclamation were not issued;

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are, and henceforward shall be, free; and that the executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons;

And I hereby declare, upon the people so declared to be free, to abstain from all violence unless in necessary self-defense; and I recommend to them that, in all cases where allowed, they labour faithfully for reasonable wages;

And I further declare and make known that such persons, of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States, to garrison forts, positions, stations and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service;

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice in regard to mankind, and in pursuance of a great and potent Constitutional authority, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

By the President,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

A true copy, with the autograph signatures of the President and the Secretary of State.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

JOHN G. NICOLAY,
Private Secretary to the President.